

**Submission  
No 1301**

## **INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA**

**Name:** Mrs Emma Carter

**Date Received:** 15 August 2023

---

My experience of giving birth to my daughter, who was stillborn, highlighted the lack of knowledge and skill of health professionals in meeting the emotional needs of mothers. I was significantly traumatised by the midwife working that day. The constant violation of my rights added to the already excruciating pain. Something that was helpful was being empowered to make decisions and have the information I needed. My obstetrician did this really well. From a hospital perspective, I was placed in the delivery suite for the admission, because the staff were concerned the maternity ward would be distressing. I got no sleep due to hearing women birthing all night. I was discharged home 24hrs post delivery my daughter via c-section. The hospital acknowledged where I was admitted was less than ideal.

I recommend two things:

1. All staff working in maternity be trained in trauma informed care for a women who gives birth to a stillborn baby. It's a critical opportunity to promote physical and emotional healing, and reduce causing more harm.
2. Hospitals have systems in place for caring for mums who have experienced stillbirth, including their immediate care following birth. A framework that applies to all healthcare settings that promotes both evidenced base care and a compassion approach. For example, having somewhere safe and appropriate to admit mothers whose babies have died. They still need and deserve postpartum care.